

ALBERT MATHIAS FRIEND, JR.

(1894–1956)

WITH the death of Albert Mathias Friend, Jr., on March 23, 1956, Dumbarton Oaks lost one of its most valued and beloved members.

Throughout his life Mr. Friend had been associated with Princeton University which he had entered as a freshman in 1911, and where he remained as a graduate student and later as an instructor and professor, succeeding Charles Rufus Morey as Marquand Professor of Art and Archaeology in 1946. In these later years Dumbarton Oaks also held a prominent place in his affections and interests; from 1944 on his thoughts, energies, and time were divided between the two institutions. His appointment as a member of the Board of Scholars in 1943 marked the beginning of his close connection with Dumbarton Oaks. In the spring of 1944 he was invited to direct a Symposium on "Portraits and Biographies in Byzantine Manuscripts," and he came to stay at Dumbarton Oaks in the autumn of the same year. He was a resident scholar from 1944 to 1946, Henri Focillon Scholar in charge of Research in 1947–1948, Director of Studies from 1948 to the time of his death; the titles changed, but throughout these years his functions were always those of a Director of Studies.

The war was almost over when Mr. Friend came to Dumbarton Oaks, and with the release of younger scholars from the services he was able to formulate and carry out plans for a more permanent organization of the research staff and its activities, and to strengthen the ties with the University by making Dumbarton Oaks a part of the academic structure of Harvard. While Junior Fellowships continued to be assigned to younger members, the more mature scholars were given academic rank, and they became at the same time members of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences of Harvard University. As a further step toward bringing Byzantine studies in

Cambridge and Washington closer together, Mr. Friend, in consultation with the authorities at Harvard, initiated a plan whereby different departments at Harvard may, on occasion, invite the scholars of Dumbarton Oaks to give courses in their special fields. With the end of the war it also became possible to establish closer connections with leading Byzantinists abroad, and he took full advantage of the opportunities thus offered.

Mr. Friend's research and teaching had been chiefly in the visual arts, but his interests were in no way restricted to this field. He was very keenly aware of the dangers of narrow specialization, and realized that, in order to understand fully the Byzantine civilization, a knowledge of all the humanities was essential, a knowledge which could be strengthened through the daily contacts of scholars whose chief interests lay in different disciplines. He was instrumental therefore in broadening the scope of the studies, which had been focused primarily on the arts, to include in an increasing measure history and law, theology and philosophy, literature, liturgy and music. The research projects which he initiated and guided and the four Symposia which he directed were conceived with this end in view.

His knowledge and experience were of invaluable assistance in the growth and expansion of the Library. He was equally helpful in the selection of objects for the Collection, and he showed his particular interest in numismatics by leaving to Dumbarton Oaks his own important collection of more than a hundred Byzantine gold coins.

In his contacts with both younger and older members of Dumbarton Oaks Mr. Friend's warm personality and his remarkable gifts as a teacher came to the fore. He had the rare faculty of communicating his own enthusiasms, of arousing interest, and of stimulating thought. The volume of essays "Late Classical and Mediaeval Studies" published in his honor, in 1955, will be a lasting memorial of the high esteem in which he was held by American and European scholars. Scholarship was for Mr. Friend a living force, to which he dedicated his life.

